

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT  
COLONEL EARL DEVINE

**HON. MARTHA MCSALLY**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2015*

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Lieutenant Colonel Earl Devine and to congratulate him on his recently awarded title of Greater Sierra Vista Veteran of the Year for 2015.

Earl graduated from Highland High School in New York in 1953. He went on to receive a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Oklahoma State University in 1958. That same year, Earl was commissioned in the Army and rose to the rank of Captain in Air Defense Artillery, where he commanded a Nike Hercules missile battery.

Earl was then assigned to the US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MAC-V), serving as an intelligence staff officer and member of the MAC-V defense force during the Tet Offensive. He was then selected to be a test director for the newly activated Modern Army Selected Systems Test, Evaluation, and Review Activity.

Earl was selected as the Operations Officer for the Current Intelligence and Indications Center, North American Air Defense Command and was responsible for threat assessment of foreign missile launches and mission determination of foreign space launches. He completed his active duty as director of administration and logistics for an intelligence organization at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

After military retirement, Earl spent 19 years with the US Army Communications Command and successor organizations receiving numerous sustained superior performance and special act awards.

Mr. Devine has been a member of the Sierra Vista Municipal Property Corporation for over 12 years and served as president for the last four. He is a member of the Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery Foundation, American Veterans (AMVETS), the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the USA Lodge #2065, the Coronado Chapter of MOAA, where he served as Deputy Director for the past 19 years, and the election committee of Post 52 of the American Legion for the past ten years.

The people of Southern Arizona owe him a great deal of gratitude for all he has done for Sierra Vista and the veteran community. Earl's continued efforts to honor the brave men and women who served our country, often in times of its greatest need, are exemplary. He truly embodies the meaning of the word "service" and will have a lasting impact on the community for generations to come.

Through Mr. Devine's efforts to honor those who served, he continues to go above and beyond the call of duty. For that, he has unquestionably earned the title of Greater Sierra Vista Veteran of the Year for 2015.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Colonel Devine for being awarded the Sierra Vista Veteran of the Year and thanking him for his years of exemplary service to our country and Southern Arizona.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. STEVE KING**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2015*

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 51, had I been present, I would have voted Yes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2015*

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, last night I was regrettably detained by a snow storm and missed votes. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on H.R. 361, yes on H.R. 615, and yes on H.R. 623.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. FRANK C. GUINTA**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2015*

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 53 I was unable to vote because my flight was cancelled due to inclement weather. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UPDATE,  
PROMOTE AND DEVELOP AMERICA'S  
TRANSPORTATION ESSENTIALS ACT OF 2015, AND THE  
ROAD USAGE CHARGE PILOT  
PROGRAM ACT OF 2015

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 3, 2015*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing two pieces of legislation to address America's growing infrastructure funding crisis and looming transportation cliff. The reason is simple: America is falling apart and falling behind. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) rated our infrastructure as a D+ and America, which once had the finest infrastructure in the world, was ranked 25th, behind Barbados and Oman, in 2013. The funding mechanism for our transportation system has been broken for years, and the Highway Trust Fund will run dry in May. On the eve of peak construction season, the U.S. Department of Transportation will be forced to stop reimbursing states for highway and transit projects. The uncertainty is already causing states and local governments to put off or cancel much-needed maintenance, let alone new investment.

If this sounds familiar, it's because we've been here before. Since the last full six year surface transportation bill expired in 2003, Congress has passed 2 partial authorizations and 23 short-term extensions, most recently in August 2014. The federal gas tax, unchanged since 1993, has locked the Highway Trust

Fund in a death spiral, and the search for necessary revenue has derailed a traditionally bipartisan, consensus-driven policy process. Just to maintain current, inadequate transportation funding, Congress has had to borrow more than \$65 billion from the general fund since 2008, in an increasingly desperate search for revenue in all corners of the federal budget.

The gas tax, since it was last raised to 18.4 cents a gallon in 1993, has lost nearly 40% of its purchasing power due to inflation and rising fuel efficiency. If the gas tax had been indexed to inflation in 1993, it would be at nearly 30 cents a gallon. Instead, the gas tax is barely higher in real terms than the first federal gas tax, levied at one cent a gallon in 1932. We're trying to fund 21st Century infrastructure with a Depression Era level of investment. It's no surprise that we face Depression Era consequences.

The Highway Trust Fund will run an annual shortfall of more than \$15 billion after 2017, and unless Congress acts, we face a drop in transportation funding of 30% over the next ten years. The situation is already dire—rough roads alone cost each driver an average of \$324 a year, and the cost of time wasted sitting in traffic will top \$1000 per family by 2020. Further, the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that our deteriorating infrastructure will restrict our national GDP growth by nearly \$900 billion by 2020.

The case for increasing our investment in infrastructure is clear. A recent S&P Ratings report suggests that every \$1.3 billion invested in infrastructure would add 29,000 jobs, \$2 billion in economic growth, and cut the deficit by \$200 million. Two congressionally authorized commissions, the Simpson Bowles deficit reduction plan, and organizations representing business, labor, environmentalists, car advocates and cyclists, all agree on the solution to solve the Highway Trust Fund crisis and increase transportation investment: raise the federal gas tax.

The UPDATE Act, which I introduced today, would increase federal gas and diesel taxes by a nickel a year, phased in over each of the next three years, and index those taxes to inflation. This would generate \$210 billion over the next ten years, enough to make up the Highway Trust Fund shortfall and increase infrastructure investment by at least \$4 billion a year. It would cost the average driver roughly \$70 a year over the next six years, or less than 20% of what every American is already paying in vehicle maintenance, lost travel time, and carbon pollution.

Increasing the gas tax is the only solution to our growing revenue crisis that is dedicated to transportation spending, sustainable for the long term, and is big enough to do the job. For the first time in years, it's also politically possible. World oil prices have fallen nearly 60% since June 2014, and prices at the pump were at a six year low last week. More than 12 states are now considering increasing gas taxes, taking advantage of low prices. 8 states acted to raise gas taxes in the last two years, including Wyoming and New Hampshire. A growing number of Senators from both parties and Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI have signaled openness, if not outright support for raising the gas tax.

The UPDATE Act will stabilize the Highway Trust Fund, and make sure that our infrastructure crisis does not worsen. The legislation